



## **MEPD and TW Bulletin 21-24**

**Date:** December 1, 2021

**To:** Eligibility Services Supervisors and Staff  
Program Managers  
Regional Directors  
Regional Attorneys  
Hearings Officers

**From:** Access and Eligibility Services Program Policy  
State Office 2115

**Subject:** **1. Texas Simplified Application Project (TSAP)**  
**2. COVID-19 Update: Additional Emergency Allotment Supplement**

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The information in this bulletin will be included in a future handbook revision. Until the handbook is updated, staff must use the information in this bulletin. If you have any questions regarding the policy information in this bulletin, follow regional procedures.

Active bulletins are posted on the following websites:

- [Medicaid for the Elderly and People with Disabilities Handbook \(MEPDH\)](https://hhs.texas.gov/laws-regulations/handbooks/mepd/policy-bulletins) at <https://hhs.texas.gov/laws-regulations/handbooks/mepd/policy-bulletins>;
- [Texas Works Handbook \(TWH\)](http://hhs.texas.gov/laws-regulations/handbooks/texas-works-handbook/texas-works-bulletins) at <http://hhs.texas.gov/laws-regulations/handbooks/texas-works-handbook/texas-works-bulletins>.

## 1. Texas Simplified Application Project (TSAP)

### Background

Senate Bill (S.B.) 224, passed by the 87<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2021, requires the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) to develop and implement simplified certification and recertification requirements for certain persons applying for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). HHSC recently received approval from the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) to implement the TSAP demonstration waiver that satisfies these requirements.

TSAP allows a 36-month certification period and waives recertification interviews. Additionally, it expands the eligible population beyond Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients. This waiver allows more households to apply for SNAP benefits using a simplified application or recertification form, and a streamlined verification process.

### Current Policy

#### SNAP

HHSC currently operates the SNAP-SSI program under an approved waiver, which allows Texas to provide a 36-month certification period and waives recertification interviews to households where all members receive SSI and have no earned income. All other SNAP eligibility policies apply to SNAP-SSI cases including allotment amounts based on countable net income and household size. ([TWH B-474.1.1.1](#), SNAP-Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Caseload)

### New Policy

#### SNAP

TSAP is a simplified application and certification process for SNAP that replaces the current SNAP-SSI program. TSAP makes the SNAP application process easier for more Texas households. TSAP follows all regular SNAP policy and processes with the following differences.

#### *Eligibility*

To be eligible for TSAP, households must meet the following criteria:

- All the members of the household are 60 or older, receive disability payments, or both;
- The members of the household have no earned income; and
- No member of the household receives SNAP benefits under the SNAP-Combined Application Project (SNAP-CAP).

### *Applications*

Clients can apply for TSAP using:

- A new simplified application (Form H0011, TSAP Application);
- The TSAP renewal form (Form H0011-R)
- Form H1010, Texas Works Application for Assistance – Your Texas Benefits;  
or
- Online at YourTexasBenefits.com.

While TSAP is not a selectable program on Form H1010, all those who apply for regular SNAP will be tested for TSAP eligibility.

### *Interviews*

An interview is required at initial certification for TSAP, but waived at recertifications with the following exceptions:

- Prior to denying a TSAP recertification;
- If information supplied by the household or authorized representative is questionable, incomplete, or contradictory; or
- If the TSAP household requests an interview.

### *Verification*

HHSC will accept the client's statement and use data matching to verify as much information as possible. Only request additional information from the household to resolve questionable information. Out-of-pocket medical expenses still require verification if the person wishes to claim a medical deduction.

### *Certification Periods*

TSAP households will be assigned a 36-month certification period.

### *SNAP Conversion*

The Texas Integrated Eligibility Redesign System (TIERS) will automatically test and convert all current SNAP-SSI households to TSAP without requiring action on the part of the household or eligibility staff. Converted SNAP-SSI households will retain their current certification periods.

Current regular SNAP cases will be tested for TSAP eligibility at recertification and certified if determined eligible.

All SNAP applicants will be tested for TSAP eligibility as part of the application process and certified if determined eligible.

If a TSAP household becomes ineligible for TSAP during their certification period, but remains eligible for SNAP, TIERS will convert the EDG to regular SNAP and the household will maintain their assigned TSAP certification period.

### *Change Reporting*

All TSAP households meet the streamlined reporting criteria and must report changes in accordance with [TWH B-620](#), Reporting Requirements. HHSC will send the new Form H0586, TSAP Change Reminder, once every 12 months during the 36-month certification period, reminding the household of what changes need to be reported, how to report changes, and the consequences of not reporting required information. TSAP households are not required to return Form H0586.

### *Medicaid Data Matching*

TIERS will conduct monthly screenings to identify Medicaid households that are potentially eligible for TSAP but are not currently receiving SNAP benefits. Medicaid households that meet TSAP criteria will receive a TSAP application packet and an accompanying cover letter detailing TSAP requirements and their potential eligibility.

### **Automation**

Changes to TIERS, YourTexasBenefits.com, and the mobile application are currently scheduled to be implemented with TIERS Release 111 on December 18, 2021.

### **Correspondence**

Forms H0011, TSAP Application, and H0011-R, TSAP Renewal, will be available on December 1, 2021.

Forms H0011A, TSAP Outreach Cover Letter, and H0586, TSAP Change Reminder, will be available on December 18, 2021.

Forms H1840, SNAP-SSI Renewal, and Form H1840-A, SNAP-SSI Renewal Cover Letter, will be retired on December 18, 2021.

### **Handbook**

The TWH will be updated in the July 1, 2022 revision.

Updates to the MEPDH are not required.

### **Training**

Training will be made available in a web-based module titled R111 Texas Simplified Application Project on December 10, 2021. A training broadcast will be sent by December 10, 2021 with further details.

**Effective Date**

This policy is effective with the implementation of TIERS Release 111 currently scheduled for December 18, 2021.

## 2. COVID-19 Update: Additional Emergency Allotment Supplement

### Background

On January 27, 2020, the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services declared that a public health emergency exists nationwide due to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. Additionally, on March 13, 2020, Governor Greg Abbott also declared a state of disaster for all counties in Texas due to the COVID-19 outbreak. HHSC is providing the following temporary guidance regarding policies and procedures for processing case actions during the COVID-19 public health emergency.

### COVID-19 Policy

#### [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program \(SNAP\)](#)

HHSC has been granted approval from the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) to issue December 2021 EA supplements to participating SNAP households. Households who are approved for SNAP in December 2021 will automatically be issued supplements that will bring the household up to the maximum monthly allotment for the household's size. All SNAP households will receive a minimum of \$95 in EA supplements.

All EA supplements will be automatically issued on the SNAP household's existing EBT card. SNAP households do not need to take any action to receive EA supplements.

HHSC will issue EA supplements for December, on a randomized staggered schedule starting December 1, 2021. The expected completion of December EA supplement issuance for active SNAP households is December 7, 2021. Households who are determined eligible for SNAP after December 7, 2021 will be issued their supplement within approximately 60 days from disposition. Staff should call in a ticket when the SNAP household reports not receiving the supplement by that timeframe.

TIERS will add the following case comment "COVID-19 SNAP supplements issued" for a case where the EA supplement was issued. HHSC will not be sending a notice to households regarding the EA supplement.

Additionally, during the pandemic, Quality Control and other case reading reviews will continue to ensure accuracy. Although SNAP households will receive a minimum of \$95 in EA supplements, staff must still ensure regular monthly benefits are calculated correctly when processing any case actions.

**Automation**

December EA supplements for active SNAP households are expected to be issued between December 1, 2021, and December 7, 2021. Households who are determined eligible for SNAP after December 7, 2021 will be issued their December EA supplement within approximately 60 days from disposition.

**Correspondence**

Correspondence changes are not required.

**Handbook**

Handbook updates are not required.

**Training**

Training is not required.

**Effective Date**

This policy is effective with the release of this bulletin. Staff will be notified when the COVID-19 policy and clarifications no longer apply.